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## **MDCH Announces \$1.4 Million in Abstinence Program Funding**

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) announces funding for abstinence-only education including \$875,000 that will be granted to nine communities and community groups in Michigan to provide abstinence education to 12- to 18-year old youths and their parents/guardians. More than \$542,000 of the grant will fund technical staff and an abstinence public awareness campaign encouraging parents/guardians to talk to their youth about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and the benefits of abstinence.

“The Michigan Abstinence Program is geared to promote abstinence from sexual activity and other related risky behaviors,” said MDCH Director Janet Olszewski. “This funding will further help our communities and the abstinence program guide our youth away from risky activity.”

The nine communities and community groups include Catholic Charities West Michigan in Muskegon; Jackson County Health Department; District Health Department #2 in Alcona, Iosco, Ogemaw & Oscoda counties; District Health Department #4 in Alpena, Cheboygan, Montmorency and Presque Isle counties; South Side Community Coalition in Lansing; St. John Investment Corporation in Detroit; The Yuinon, Inc., in Detroit; the Tuscola Intermediate School District and Wedgwood Christian Services in Grand Rapids.

Based on the latest available population data, in 1996, the teen pregnancy rate was 76.7 pregnancies for every 1,000 females aged 15-19. In 2006, the rate was 54.0 per 1,000 – a 29.6 percent decrease. MAP and other state programs and initiatives have helped contribute to this decline. The funding will provide communities with technical assistance, trainings and education materials. Each community will develop an advisory council, which will design and implement unique abstinence activities, such as, education sessions for parents, abstinence curricula, family homework, recreational events and peer education sessions.

To order abstinence education materials, please visit the Michigan Department of Community Health’s Health Promotions Clearinghouse at [www.hpclearinghouse.org](http://www.hpclearinghouse.org) or call 1-800-353-8227.

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